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AGAWAM

Advertiser News

DECEMBER 29, 2011

VOL. 33, NO. 41

\$1.00



GIRLS
BASKETBALL . . .14

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A year of *weathering* the storms

Turley Publications file photos

Feeding Hills resident Randy Ennis captured this image of the June 1 tornado as it passed through Springfield on its rampage through Western Mass. This was just one of a series of weather-related events residents suffered through this year.



What hit the headlines in 2011

By Jennifer Wroblewski
Staff Writer

In many ways, the community of Agawam has struggled through 2011 and met the same challenges that other communities across the state have had: budget shortfalls and potential fiscal deficits, politics and uncertainty during election season, and perhaps most notably, multiple tussles with Mother Nature over the course of the last 12 months.

In the last year, our community has grappled with a winter full of heavy snowfall, a tornado that went on a rampage in Western Mass, devastating towns along its 39-mile path (including our own) as well as a tropical storm that caused even more damage to our already weakened trees, and let's not forget October's snowstorm, which brought with it widespread power outages and resulted in a

multi-million dollar cleanup.

Despite the struggles, however, residents in the region watched with pride as local authors worked to publish their works of fiction and nonfiction while local firefighters rose to the challenge of raising money for the American Lung Association, and – on the high school sports level – the town cheered when Agawam Boys Volleyball won Western Massachusetts Division 1 Championship by defeating defending champion Chicopee Comp.; as the Agawam Lady Brownies made it to the Western Massachusetts Division 1 softball finals and the Agawam Lady Brownies Girls Lacrosse made it to the semi-finals of the Western Massachusetts Division 1 tournament. Meanwhile the Agawam Boys and Girls Tennis teams both made it to the semi-finals of the Western Massachusetts Division 1 tournament.

Yes, 2011 was a busy year. So as we prepare for the coming of 2012, we hope you enjoy our selection of some of the most significant headlines from the past 52 weeks.

January

A Connecticut man was held in connection with a robbery of the New Alliance Bank in Feeding Hills and other bank robberies in the area. Police charged Gerund A. Mickens of Bloomfield, Conn., with the robbery, which took place in December 2010.

The planning board denied subdivision approval for Tirone Development at its final meeting in 2010. The decision was made after months of continued public hearings for the four-lot subdivision.

Three firefighters were injured while battling a house fire on Main Street on Jan.

10. The fire at 855 Main St. was less than a quarter mile down the road from fire headquarters. It caused an estimated \$60,000 in damages. Fire officials determined the cause of the fire was an unattended space heater left too close to a wall.

In response the Jan. 12 snowstorm, the Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency (MEMA) activated the State Emergency Operations Center (SEOC), located at MEMA headquarters in Framingham as well as three regional operations centers in Agawam, Tewksbury and Bridgewater. The storm – which brought 21 inches of snow to Agawam – was so intense that Gov. Deval Patrick declared a state of emergency.

Please see 2011, page 3



Council bids farewell to Walsh, Simpson, Messick

By Gregory A. Scibelli

Turley Publications Correspondent

AGAWAM – The Agawam City Council bid farewell to three outgoing councilors during its final meeting of 2011 as President Donald Rheault recognized councilors John Walsh, Jill Simpson and Jill Messick.

Three former councilors will return to the council on Jan. 3.

Of the outgoing councilors, Simpson had the longest tenure as she served for 18 years. She is widely regarded for her passion of serving the townspeople, and being a strong liaison for the council to the school committee. For many years, Simpson headed the school budget subcommittee and worked hard to create a good relationship between the two elected boards, which typically spar over the budget each year.

Simpson said she has seen a lot of change and feels like she was able to do much to help support the town.

"I have seen a lot of change come through this town since I first joined the council," she said. "I want to thank the citizens for supporting me throughout the years and it has been a privilege and an honor to serve on the council."

Councilor Dennis Perry, a councilor for 16 years, said he has watched Simpson throughout her tenure and believes she possessed the unique quality of bringing an argument to a close.

"You brought a unique style to the council," said Perry. "You brought passion for 16 years and your own point-of-view."

Messick departs the council but will con-

continue to serve as a member of the Conservation Commission, a position that is appointed by the city council. Messick was instrumental in starting the Energy Commission, which is comprised of councilors, department heads, and town residents and is dedicated to helping the town pursue energy efficient options. She said the commission is her proudest achievement.

"I wanted to get the Energy Commission up and running," said Messick. "Energy consumption is one of our biggest issues and we need to be mindful of how we are using energy and what options are out there to conserve it."

Messick is regarded for her passion what we she believes and her preparedness for council discussions.

Council Vice President Robert Rossi said he has a lot of respect for Messick and her work on the council.

"I admire your passion," said Rossi. "Even when we were on opposite ends of an issue, you stood up for what you believed in. I am looking forward to continuing to work with you on other issues."

Walsh, a retired certified public accountant, served on the council for just one two-year term, but made a huge impact in the short time period as he headed up the finance subcommittee. Several councilors complimented Walsh's leadership and his knowledge of finances. He was also lauded from his detailed reports of subcommittee meetings, which are read into record at regular council meetings and considered by the entire council body in making financial decisions.

"I really admire the things you have done



Turley Publications photo by Gregory A. Scibelli

**From left, outgoing city councilors John Walsh, Jill Simpson and Jill Mes-
sick were honored for their service with the council at its final regular
meeting of 2011 on Dec. 19.**

with the finance subcommittee," said Councilor Joseph Mineo.

Walsh said he was proud to have been part of the council for the two years, and of twice helping lead the finance committee to recommend and pass tax shifts that were slightly in favor of the businesses.

“I really think it was important to help the businesses because the town had gotten a

reputation for not being business-friendly,” said Walsh. “This helps make the town more attractive for businesses and can help the economy here.”

Walsh is also a Rotarian and a member of the Lions Club.

Paul Cavallo, Cecelia Calabrese and Chris Johnson will occupy the three empty seats in January.

WHERE IS IT?

Each week *Agawam Advertiser News* will feature a photo of a local building, item, sign, place or landmark and ask readers to pick their brains to figure out where it is or even what it is. Check here each week to test your knowledge of the area where we live and work. The photo will be from either Agawam or Feeding Hills, but we'll always give you a hint or two.

The answer to this week's "Where is it?" will run in next week's edition along with the name of the first person to submit a correct answer and a new trivia photo for you to consider.

E-mail answers or future Where Is It? suggestions to editor Jennifer Wroblewski at jwroblewski@turley.com.



Turley Publications photo by Connie J. Casagrande

This week's "Where is it?" can be found at a place that's a great stop if you're in need of a quick meal.



Last week's photo: That photo can be found at the United States Post Office located in both Agawam and Feeding Hills.

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2011, from page 1

The Agawam Piranhas swim team was presented with a flag that was flown in Iraq for them by the 747th MP Co. Members of the Armed Services, the 747th MP Co., Mayor Richard A. Cohen and Christopher Sparks, director of Agawam Parks and Recreation, were on hand for the flag-raising ceremony Jan. 15.

Less than one year after they were denied reappointment to Agawam Veterans Council for allegedly failing to submit letters of interest for the position, Frank Mazzei and Christopher Sanchez expressed surprise when Cohen solicited their interest in being appointed this year. The two were longtime members of the veterans council when their terms expired last year and they were not re-appointed to the positions.

Agawam resident Rita G. Moore was named the 2011 Daniel J. Gallivan Award recipient by the St. Patrick's Committee of Holyoke for her contribution to the overall success of the annual parade. Moore joined the committee in 2001, where she helped to market and promote the nation's second-largest annual St. Patrick's Day parade.



Turley Publications file photos

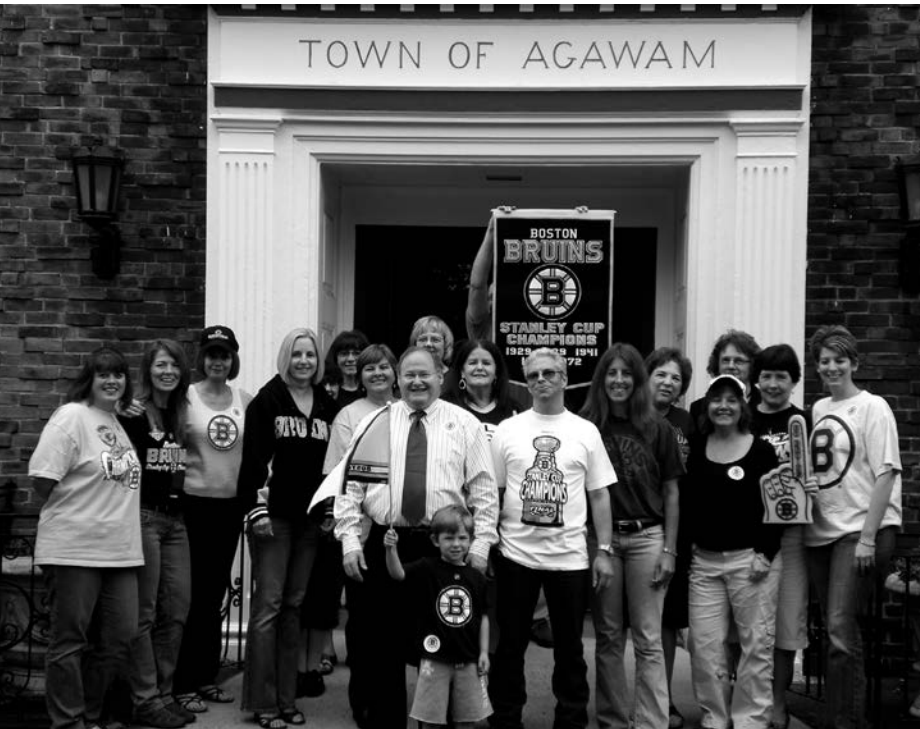
Feeding Hills residents Amy and Scott Smith sent us this photo of their beagle, Daisy with Boston terrier Buster.

February

While adults were worrying about snow removal budgets and messy commutes, local students celebrated what was becoming a once-a-week occurrence in Western Mass: the snow day. With the spate of storms that hit the area in the new year, Agawam used its allotted five snow days and officials began looking at options to make up those days, including possibly eliminating vacations scheduled for February and April.

Agawam High School junior Ashley Casello took the top honor at American International College's 71st annual Model Congress held Jan. 14-16 at American International College. Over 250 students from New England and New York debated and voted on legislation during the three-day event. Her debating skills earned her "Best Delegate" and a full four-year scholarship to the college.

Department of Public Works Superintendent Anthony Sylvia announced to the city council that he was resigning from his position to work for Tighe & Bond. Sylvia joined the department in July 2009.



Town Hall employees donned their Bruins attire to celebrate the team's 2011 Stanley Cup championship.

City councilor Joseph Mineo raised concerns about the issuance of cellular telephones for Agawam School District employees during the council's Feb. 7 meeting. His questioning of the bill met with contention from Superintendent of Schools Mary Czajkowski over what she viewed as using the wrong channels to acquire information about the bill. The expenditure was in excess of \$10,000.

Following the resignation of the DPW director, Mayor Richard Cohen announced that he chose Christopher Golba to take over as head of that department. Golba has more than 30 years of experience working in the public works field in the city of Chicopee and has worked in Agawam for the past six years. He had been the deputy superintendent of the public works department.

For 17-year-old Jessica Colson, winning the Colleen Contest was a dream come true and an unexpected surprise. Colson was named the winner and honored as the 2011

Colleen in a coronation brunch held Feb. 13. She outlasted nine other contestants named to the final round, which included interviews with a panel of judges. She also answered a question in front of a live audience at the brunch.

March

Union contract and overflowing department head salaries could be key targets of the Ad Hoc Reorganization Committee, which met Feb. 23 at the Agawam Public Library. Using the mayor's \$85,000 a year salary as a benchmark for comparing other salaries in town, committee chairman and city councilor Dennis Perry reported that several department heads were making more than the mayor, including several who make in excess of \$100,000 per year.

The Agawam School Department faced serious staffing cuts and the addition of education.

Please see 2011, page 6

Season's Greetings from all of your friends at Berkshire Bank!



As we reflect on what makes us America's Most Exciting Bank and what we are most grateful for this year, the answer is easy – it's our customers and communities!

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Season's Greetings and Happy New Year!

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Opinion

Our heroes could be right next door

We would like to remind our readers that the deadline is nearly upon us for nominations for recognition at the 10th annual Hometown Heroes Breakfast sponsored by the American Red Cross Pioneer Valley Chapter and Columbia Gas of Massachusetts at the MassMutual Center in Springfield on Thursday, March 15, 2012.

The Red Cross is looking for local individuals (or a group of individuals) who have “shown courage, kindness and an unselfish character when a friend, family member or stranger faced a life-threatening situation” or “who have had an extraordinary impact on his/her community or fellow man.”

Given the trying and eventful year that is now coming to a close, we know that there are so many around Agawam who deserve this honor and are this honor and both we and the Red Cross would like to hold them high as an example of what we can accomplish when we put our differences aside. From the various weather-related disasters like the tornado and winter storm that have beset our town and area to the many community fundraisers and benefits that make our town what it is, we know they’re out there – we report on them every week. So we hope you can spare a few moments to give a nod to those around us that have helped save lives or protected the quality of life of those around them.

Those who are ultimately honored in March will be chosen from among the nominees by a committee from the local region, including past recipients. The Hometown Heroes Breakfast is the largest fundraising event for the Pioneer Valley Chapter of the American Red Cross, which serves greater Hampden, Hampshire and Franklin counties, assisting families affected by disaster, helping military families relay emergency communications to their deployed loved ones and providing lifesaving training pro-



grams.

So, for all these reasons – but mostly to celebrate our resolve and dedication as a community – please visit the Pioneer Valley Chapter’s website at www.redcrosswm.org/heroes. Time is running out, as nominations

must be submitted online or postmarked no later than Dec. 30. And for our business community, sponsorship opportunities are also available, as a number of leadership sponsors like Columbia Gas, OMG, Inc., WWLP, the Republican and Lia Cars have

already stepped forward.

For more information, contact Dawn Leaks at leaksd@usa.redcross.org or 413-233-1006.

A ‘whirlwind’ of a year

What a difference a year makes!

At this time in 2010, I was closing out my five years as a reporter and anxiously awaiting taking over the editorship of the *Agawam Advertiser News*, living in a shoebox for an apartment, and spending the majority of my free time with my med student boyfriend. Fast forward 365 days and I’ve got nearly a year under my belt as an editor, I’ve moved into a much bigger (more comfortable) apartment, ended my relationship and now spend the majority of my time (both at work and outside of work) with my friend Emily, who replaced me as the reporter/photographer at my old newspaper.

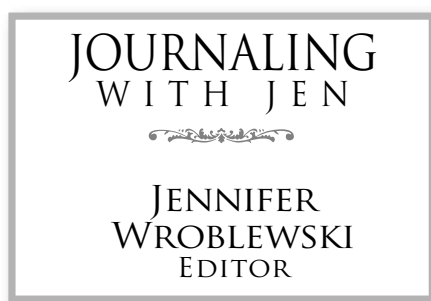
Never in my wildest dreams did I anticipate 2011 would turn out as it has.

For starters, I don’t think I ever took the threat seriously the weather posed to our little hamlet of Western Mass. Mountains of snow is about all I’d ever worried about here, and I reacted appropriately by purchasing a shiny new four-wheel-drive SUV (perfect for navigating the snowy backroads of Monson) a few years ago. Today, my car is slightly less shiny, a direct result of the tornado it survived while sitting in my driveway at my old apartment in June. The dents and dings incurred during that “storm” serve as a reminder to me to be thankful for the things I’m fortunate to have today, especially when so many people lost not only their cars, but their homes.

In addition to teaching me that valuable life lesson, the June 1 tornado also helped me forge new friendships. In covering the aftermath in my hometown, I’d spent countless hours with my counterparts at *The Journal Register*, walking amid the

rubble, connecting with the residents who were affected, and working in the newsroom to put together that week’s edition. The first few days after the tornado were emotional (to say the least) but the seeds of friendship were sown in the ruins. Nearly seven months later, I consider Emily to be one of my closest friends.

When Mother Nature bestowed upon us



her gift of snow during Halloween weekend, it was Emily who provided a place for me to stay for nearly a week when I (begrudgingly) decided to leave my frigid new apartment.

Yet again, the weather played an important role in teaching me a life lesson: be thankful for the people in your life who love you and are willing to help you through your struggles. In moving two hours away from my parents and my twin brother, I learned how to be independent fairly quickly. But independence will only get you so far when you have no heat or electricity and are more or less homeless despite the fact that you actually have a home. During those eight long days, several friends offered assistance (food and shelter, for instance), while others simply checked in to make sure I was OK. It’s

comforting to know that there are people who care about your well-being and I’m still grateful to everyone who helped me then.

I’ve been given the opportunity to apply those lessons recently, and have tried to “pay it forward,” so to speak. A few weeks ago, my parents faced the difficult decision to put down their 16-year-old cat, Basia. Anyone who has ever loved a pet can understand the devastating sense of loss that accompanies that decision, especially during the holiday season. Basia had been a part of my life since I was 12; when my brother and I left home for college, she helped to bridge the transition for my parents. Without her, they are truly experiencing the “empty nest syndrome.”

Despite the sadness I feel over her loss, I have noticed it’s helped me to foster a closer relationship with my parents, physical distance notwithstanding. I’ve taken to calling them more often and have welcomed them as guests in my spacious apartment — something I couldn’t do at my old place.

Losing my beloved pet has also taught me to appreciate those we love – including our four-legged friends – because we don’t know for how long we’ll have them.

If there’s one thing I’ve realized these last 365 days from my own life and from watching those who have struggled around me, it’s that life isn’t always easy, but we’re never given more than we can handle, I hope. Things won’t change overnight, but somehow, with time, life moves on. Here’s hoping life moves in a more peaceful direction for 2012.

Happy New Year, everyone!

AGAWAM Advertiser News

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THE AGAWAM ADVERTISER NEWS (U.S.P.S.-001-170)
is published weekly for \$35 yearly/\$50 for two years.
Second class postage is paid at EH., MA 01030 & at as-
sociated offices. Postmaster: Send address changes to
The Agawam Advertiser News, c/o Turley Publications,
24 Water Street, Palmer, MA 01069. The Agawam Ad-
vertiser News is a publication of Turley Publications
Inc., 24 Water Street, Palmer, MA 01069.

Letters to the Editor must include a name, address, and daytime telephone number for author verification purposes. We do not publish anonymous letters. All letters are subject to editing for content and space. The deadline is Tuesday at 9:00 a.m. Please send letters to *Agawam Advertiser News*, Letters to the Editor, Attn: Teri Machia, 23 Southwick St., Feeding Hills, MA 01030 or e-mail aan@turley.com.

'Voice of Fenway Park' display at library

The Agawam Public Library will host a display of collections belonging to Carl Beane, "The Voice of Fenway Park," for the month of January beginning Jan. 4.

Included in the display will be hockey sticks from Gordie Howe, Patrick Roy, Bobby Orr and others given to Beane by the players themselves. From his collection of baseball items, there will be caps from Manny Ramirez, Dice-K, Dustin Pedroia, Ted Williams, and Derek Jeter. Other items in the display will be jerseys from Wade Boggs, Kevin Gar-

nett, Tom Brady, and Bruins goalie Tim Thomas.

Beane, a native of Agawam, has been in broadcasting since 1972. Since 1977, he has covered the Red Sox, Bruins, Patriots and Celtics. Since 2003, he has been the voice of Fenway Park and was behind the microphone in 2004 and 2007 when the Boston Red Sox won the World Series. He is a regular sports columnist for Turley Publications, publisher of the AAN.

Viewing is during regular library hours.

Toys for Tots at McKenna Orthodontics



Turley Publications courtesy photo

McKenna Orthodontics, of Feeding Hills and Chicopee, held its first Toys for Tots collection this year. The endeavor was hugely successful due to the generosity of staff, patients and their families. Dr. Stephen W. McKenna is pictured with some of the donated toys that went a long way in making this a very merry Christmas for so many deserving children.

Rotary Club plans year-end review

The Agawam Rotary Club will meet Wednesday, Jan. 4 at 12:15 p.m. at Storowton Tavern with guest speaker Tracey Pigeon from the Atrium.

Check the Rotary out locally at www.agawamrotary.org. As Rotarians, they sponsor local scholarships and charities and raise money for local, national, and international service projects, including the worldwide elimination of polio and providing clean drinking water. For more information on Rotary International, visit rotary.org.

The Garden Lady answers the last question of 2011

Donna from Hardwick received a bouquet of mixed greens as a Christmas centerpiece and wondered if the holly would root in its vase. "The branches are loaded with berries! I can just imagine it growing in my yard. Is there any chance the stems will form roots if I let them sit for a while? If so, about how long will it take?"

Unfortunately, you have a couple of things going against you in your attempt to root holly and grow it in your yard. First, the holly you were given in your bouquet may very well be from a variety that it not hardy in our area. Just like cut flowers that are flown in to the local florist from far away, the holly may very well have been too. In fact, I read recently that there are very few commercial holly orchards in the eastern U.S.

Secondly, water is not the best medium in which to root plants, although we all have had success using this method with ivies, begonias and other common houseplants. It is far better to use a rooting medium that will texturally mimic the soil in which the plant will grow - this only makes sense because inevitably the cutting will need to be transplanted. Paul Rogers, my good friend and fellow horticulturist, coined the term “watery roots”- I can just imagine how difficult of a time those watery roots would have trying to make their way into real soil, with sand, small rocks and such after being used to zero resistance. Talk about transplant shock!

If you'd still like to continue with your science experiment, re-cut and insert the stems into an appropriate rooting medium such as a mixture of peat and perlite or pine bark. Cut just below a node (the bump from which leaves form) and gently remove the berries and all but the top few leaves. If you can find a rooting hormone suitable for semi hardwood cuttings all the better - this will hasten the

formation of roots. Just give the stem a quick dip into the powder and tap off the excess. Water well and put the pot with the cutting into a plastic bag to increase humidity and keep the stem from wilting - it may help to make a tent of sorts so that the plastic doesn't rest right on the cutting. The specimen should go in the shade and with any luck roots will form in approximately two months, although it may take longer. Give it another couple of months to form a healthy root ball before transplanting into a larger container. Once the weather warms plant the rooted cutting outdoors into a "nursery bed" - a space in your yard where you can keep an eye on it and easily maintain it for a season or two before finally sinking it into its permanent spot. If you want to attempt this with cuttings from a bush in your yard, the best time to harvest the stems is August through November.



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Don't forget that berry production is dependent on pollination. Most nurseries will recommend that you have one male for every three females in your yard. Further research has indicated that hollies are rather promiscuous; some species are more compatible with one another than once thought, and that pollination can occur with plants spaced one-eighth of a mile apart or farther as long as honey bees and other insects are out and working and flowers are viable. Good luck! I'll be anxious to hear how your experiment turned out.

Roberta McQuaid graduated from the Stockbridge School of Agriculture at the University of Massachusetts. For the last 19 years, she has held the position of staff horticulturalist at Old Sturbridge Village. She enjoys growing food, as well as flowers. Have a question for her? Email it to journalregister@turley.com with "Gardening Question" in the subject line.

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GARDEN



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2011, from page 3

cational fees in order to maintain a level-service budget for fiscal year 2012. The cuts would result in increased class sizes, limited course offerings, and the unavailability of the media center. Cuts would also affect the quality of the district's programs and services.

It was a test of endurance, but all five Agawam firefighters that participated in the American Lung Association's annual Fight for Air Climb in Springfield on March 5 finished the challenge and raised \$500 for the charity in the process.

In preparing his State of the City Address to a group of about 50 residents at Agawam Senior Center, Mayor Richard A. Cohen said he wanted to adhere to the ABCs of writing: accuracy, brevity and clarity. And while his speech lasted less than 10 minutes as promised, he tried to assure residents that the town of Agawam was prepared for the future.

An investigation into the sale of narcotics in town yielded six arrests, according to Agawam Police Lt. Richard Light. Those charged were K'Chawn Wright of Spring-

Bourbon Park on March 16.

The Environmental Protection Agency began an investigation into a raw sewage leak on Meadow Street in Agawam after the DPW found unauthorized excavation over a 10-inch and 20-inch pressurized waste water main.

In an effort to balance the operating budget for fiscal year 2012, Mayor Richard A. Cohen called on the city's unionized employees to forgo their one percent raise for the 2011-2012 contract year. The effort would help to maintain resources and staffing, he said.

Dr. Mary A. Czajkowski was offered and accepted the superintendent's position in Barnstable, leaving Agawam in need of a new school department head.

April

A chimney fire caused in excess of \$100,000 in damage to a two-story home on Barry Street. Though the family was unable to return to the home following the fire there, fire officials said a majority of their belongings were salvageable.



Turley Publications file photos

Agawam call-volunteer firefighters participated in a burn drill at Springfield Fire Academy in May.

May

After a last-minute postponement of the vote on the school department's fiscal year 2012 budget, the school committee met again April 29 and passed the \$34 million budget by a vote of 4 to 3. The budget includes \$1.6 million in cuts.

The Agawam Fire Department announced the retirement of Agawam Fire Chief Stephen Martin effective May 6. Martin dedicated over 29 years of service to the department including four years as chief and 12 as deputy chief. Following Martin's retirement, Deputy Chief Alan Sirois took over his duties as acting chief.

Mayor Richard A. Cohen announced his intention to seek another two years in office during a re-election fundraiser on May 6. Cohen spent 10 non-consecutive years in the mayor's seat.

The Agawam School Committee voted 7-0 to approve the appointment of Assistant Superintendent William J. Sapelli to interim superintendent until Aug. 27, 2012. Outgo-

ing Superintendent Dr. Mary Czajkowski told the school committee that Sapelli would be the best candidate for the position.

A proposed parking ban in the area of Six Flags Amusement Park is not so amusing for theme park visitors. The proposal by the city council public safety subcommittee, would bar non-resident parking on several side streets in the area.

June

Memorial Day marked a great showing of patriotism for Agawam as the town celebrated the holiday by honoring the men and women who had sacrificed their lives in the Armed Forces in various wars throughout the years.

For the third time since being elected to the U.S. Senate seat two years ago, Sen. Scott Brown, R-Massachusetts, visited Agawam to meet with Mayor Richard A. Cohen and state Rep. Nicholas Boldyga, R-Southwick, for a brief tour of the town. During that visit, Cohen lauded the regular communication that occurs between local, state and federal representatives.

On the afternoon of Wednesday, June 1, a tornado tore a 39-mile path of destruction through Western Massachusetts, including the town of Agawam, damaging homes and trees, haphazardly strewn power lines across roadways, and forever changing the landscape of our rural area. The tornado was reported in Westfield around 4:30 p.m. According to a spokesperson for the National Weather Service. It moved through Westfield, Agawam, West Springfield, Springfield, Chicopee, Wilbraham, Monson, Brimfield and Sturbridge, picking up intensity as it went with winds as high as 160 miles per hour.

In the aftermath, town officials announced that a total of 29 streets were reportedly affected by the storm. In addition to the 2,500 people who were affected, Robinson State Park sustained heavy damage when the tornado passed through. With the severity of the damage in the area, officials from the Department of Conservation and Recreation ruled the park was not safe for the public.

Agawam High School's graduation at Symphony Hall in Springfield was a celebra-

Please see 2011, page 7



For the third time since his election, U.S. Sen. Scott Brown, R-Massachusetts (second from right), visited Agawam in May to meet with Mayor Richard A. Cohen (right) and state Rep. Nicholas Boldyga, R-Southwick (left). Also pictured is Agawam City Councilor George Bitzas (second from left).

field; Michael Zanetti of Agawam; Christopher J. Tessier of Agawam; Daniel S. Gomes of Feeding Hills; JeanPaul J. Sicard of Feeding Hills; and Nicholas Rodriguez of Springfield.

School Superintendent Dr. Mary A. Czajkowski was named one of three finalists for the superintendent's job at the Barnstable Public Schools. As head of the schools since 2002, Czajkowski insisted she was not actively pursuing a career change but was asked by consultants to look at the Barnstable position.

Army Spc. Andrew Menard, a combat medic with an artillery unit serving in Afghanistan, was home for his two-week "R and R," during which time his wife, Brigitte and mother, Lois Menard planned a surprise party for him. Since he was home for such a short period of time, and with a large family whom Brigitte knew he would want to see, she decided to plan an event in his honor at

Though the extent of the clean-up costs associated with the March raw sewage leak was unknown, the town was able to obtain approval from the state Department of Revenue to expend up to \$350,000.

Less than one month after the announcement that the town's school department would lose its leader in July when Dr. Mary A. Czajkowski takes a new position in Barnstable, the department faced another loss: that of John Provost, director of special services, who was offered the superintendent's role in North Brookfield.

Former state Rep. Rosemary Sandlin announced that she will run for mayor in the fall election. If elected, Sandlin said she would study every barrier to attracting new businesses. She is the second resident to announce an election bid this fall. Walter A. Meissner has also declared his intention to seek the mayor's seat.



Crews were out in full force working to clean up the town following a twister that touched down June 1.



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2011, from page 7

began at Robinson State Park, which was closed to the public following the storm. An estimated 19 acres of the state park was damaged on June 1.

Mayor Richard A. Cohen and the city council not only voted in June to approve the school department's \$73.3 million budget for fiscal year 2013, but also proposed to make an additional \$250,000 available to the school department to restore impending teacher and paraprofessional layoffs. The unexpected funding came at the end of a budget process that at times was heated and controversial.



Giovanni Santaniello, 2, of Westfield, shows off the fruits of his labor while picking strawberries at Provin Mountin Farms in Feeding Hills this summer.

If a picture says a thousand words, David Cecchi's most recent Images of America series book, "Riverside Park," which features over 200 vintage photos, says a great deal about the history of Agawam's former amusement park. To celebrate the release of the book, Cecchi (chairman of the Agawam Historical Commission and member of the Agawam Historical Association), scheduled a book signing to be held Aug. 11 at the Captain Charles Leonard House on Main Street.

Four months after announcing her intention to run for mayor in the fall, Rosemary Sandlin was certified as a candidate. As a result, a preliminary election will be scheduled to determine which two names will appear on the November election ballot. Sandlin is one of three people – including Incumbent Mayor Richard A. Cohen and political newcomer Walter A. Meissner III – who will vie for the seat in a primary election in October.

Alicia Perez, an Agawam resident and the defendant in a criminal prosecution for tax fraud, was detained without bail as a flight risk during a hearing on July 29. Perez, who pleaded not guilty to all counts against her, is alleged to have committed fraud in connection with a tax preparation business she operated around 2007. In order to obtain greater tax refunds for her customers, she reportedly began falsifying their claims of net business profits.

An Agawam business owner was indicted following a criminal investigation into a March sewage-break. On Aug. 10, the Hampden County Grand Jury returned a three-count indictment charging Joseph O'Malley, 30, of West Brookfield, with violations of the Massachusetts Wetlands Protection Act and the Massachusetts Clean Water Act as well as injury to real or personal property of the town of Agawam.

In an effort to eliminate the adopted extra-curricular activity fee for students, the Agawam School Committee voted unanimously at its Aug. 16 meeting to raise the annual student fee for parking at the high school and impose an athletic fee. The committee decided to impose a \$100 per sport athletic fee (with a \$200 yearly cap per athlete and a \$400 family cap) and a \$25 per club/organi-



Turley Publications file photos

Elizabeth Nadeau found the perfect way to stay cool during a summer heat wave.

zation fee for students involved in extracurricular activities (excluding National Honor Society).

September

Despite forecasts and reports reporting a severe tropical storm (known as Irene), the town of Agawam remained largely unaffected thanks in large part to the preparedness of public safety and public works personnel. About eight inches of rain fell during Irene, though no major floods were reported

in town. The storm did cause a few downed trees and power lines, but power was quickly restored and no buildings suffered major damage, said Mayor Richard A. Cohen.

The city council unanimously adopted a taxable personal property exemption for businesses at its Sept. 6 meeting, a change that town officials hope will attract new businesses to the community and help current businesses save money. The goal is to stimulate the economy by creating jobs, adding to the town's tax base and hopefully low-

Please see 2011, page 9



Agawam students didn't let a little rain dampen their spirits on the first day of school Sept. 6.



The Agawam Fire Department mascot, Blaze.

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2011, from page 8

ering taxes for residents through tax revenue raised from businesses.

Flanked by firefighters, Agawam Fire Chief Alan Sirois opened the ceremony for the 10th anniversary of the Sept. 11, 2001 terrorist attacks. The event was held in front of Agawam Fire Headquarters on Main Street and attracted one of the largest crowds for Agawam 9/11 anniversary remembrances.

Following the completion of road work on Springfield Street, crews will move on to Losito Lane, Hendom Drive, Poplar Street, Bridge Street, One-If-By Street and Two-If-By Lane. The paving project on Springfield Street started Sept. 6 and was scheduled to take about two weeks to complete. The cost of the project was \$565,000; paid for through Chapter 90 money, a state fund that reimburses communities for repaving, repairing and otherwise improving local roads.

The three candidates for mayor, who square off in a preliminary election on Oct. 11, have very different views on how Agawam may best promote itself as a business-friendly environment. Incumbent Mayor Richard A. Cohen faces two challengers for his seat: Rosemary Sandlin and Walter A. Meissner III. Each have said there is truth to one resident's claim that the town is perceived as anti-business. For his part, Cohen said that notion is misguided.

If the Agawam City Council approves resolutions sponsored by Mayor Richard A. Cohen, more local seniors may be eligible for tax exemptions. According to Kevin Baldini, Agawam's tax assessor, the mayor proposed to change Clause 41 C and Clause 17 D. The former exemption options would allow the town to make adjustments in the eligibility requirements seniors must meet in order to qualify for a property tax exemption under state law. The latter would tie the asset limit and exemption amount to a cost of living adjustment as given to communities.

The sweet smell of apples filled the air at the Agawam Historical Association's second annual Apple Festival on Sept. 24. There, attendees participated in apple pie baking contests and were given house tours of the historical Thomas Smith House located on North West Street.

October

The town of Agawam will receive funding from the Massachusetts School Building Authority (MSBA) to repair the roof at Agawam Junior High School in addition to performing "green" upgrades relieving much of the burden on taxpayers to bond the near \$3 million project. The MSBA announced it would give \$1.6 million for the proposed project. The scope of the work will replace the entire roof, windows and doors at the junior high.

Agawam School Committee may seek to change how money is distributed from one school district into another. A discussion at a September meeting over the rising costs of special education students prompted Vice Chairman Anthony Bonavita to raise the idea of seeking a legislative change as a way of providing financial relief for the school budget.

Amid accusations of political posturing, as well as criticism of limiting the tax base during difficult economic times, the city council passed a resolution increasing tax exemption amounts for senior citizens residing in town. The resolution passed with nine councilors in favor and one against. It was proposed as a way to help seniors put more money in their pockets during tough economic times. Just days before voters decided which mayoral candidates will compete in the November election, the three candidates faced off in a candidate forum. There, incumbent Mayor Richard A. Cohen and his challengers, Rosemary Sandlin and Walter Meissner III, debated issues such as taxes and economic development before an audience of 60 resi-



Turley Publications file photos

Agawam Firefighter/Paramedic Andy Paschenko hoisted the flag during the 9/11 remembrance ceremony held at Agawam Fire Headquarters. 2011 marked the 10th anniversary of the terrorist attacks.

dents. Cohen and Sandlin ultimately beat out Meissner to advance to the general election.

In the aftermath of the June 1 tornado, one Agawam student became a hero to a rival school, which was damaged when the storm ripped through Springfield. Zachary Sabadosa, a member of the Agawam High School varsity baseball team, wrote an essay for a writing contest (sponsored by ESPN and Powerade) which won rival Cathedral High School a \$20,000 grant for repairs.

A total of 18 people, including eight incumbents, will face off in the November town election to fill 11 seats on the Agawam City Council, while six people, including five incumbents, will run for six available school committee seats.

If the efforts of town officials pay off,

residents in Agawam and West Springfield could benefit from programs offered at a YMCA facility in Agawam. According to Mayor Richard A. Cohen, a local group is working with YMCA of Greater Springfield to open a storefront Y-Express in town. The group is in the process of drafting a business plan that should be completed in late October. The project is one Cohen has been working on for nearly two years.

November

The town of Agawam was in a state of flux for nearly a week when the Halloween storm hit the area, causing downed trees and massive power outages. In addition to nearly a foot of snow, roadways were left impassable



(From left) Incumbent Mayor Richard A. Cohen squared off with challengers Rosemary Sandlin and Walter Meissner III during a debate in October.

due to fallen trees and the lack of electricity that darkened the town at night caused many residents to feel a chill without a source of heat.

While some residents had their power restored by Monday, a great many more were left without for up to a week or more. Following the storm, town officials wanted to sit down with Western Massachusetts Electric Company (WEMCO) to discuss what their action plan is to address the lack of response to the storm.

Local officials, veterans and residents gathered at Veterans Green to celebrate Veterans Day with a ceremony to thank those who have served for their service. Among those in attendance were Aldo Mancini, veterans council chairman; Richard Girard, veterans services director; state Rep. Nicholas Boldyga, R-Southwick; and Mayor Richard A. Cohen.

Students and staff at Agawam High School mourned the loss of one of their own following the death of a student on Nov. 13. Grief councilors were on hand at the school to help students and staff who needed it.

A majority of city councilors approved an "in lieu of tax" agreement with Rivermoor-Citizens, LLC, which plan to install two solar panel arks and sell energy credits to the Hood milk factory as well as the town at a discounted rate. The agreement did not come without a lot of questions, criticisms and comments from city councilors, however. The mayor, several residents and town officials, and seven councilors spoke in favor of the proposal, which ultimately passed.

The city council unanimously approved the spending of up to \$2.35 million to cover the costs of the cleanup associated with the Oct. 29 snowstorm. The town should be able to recuperate up to 75 percent of the amount that it will have to spend on the independent contractor hired to go street to street picking up tree branches, limbs and other debris from the storm left by residents at the curb.

December

Local artist Sarah Platanitis was one of a number of area residents involved with the Extreme Makeover: Home Edition project that took place in Springfield earlier in the fall, which was aired on televisions Dec. 2. Platanitis became involved in the makeover of the Walker family home because of a professional connection she had with another small, independent business based in Chicopee. Local businesses involved with the makeover included Allied Flooring & Paint, Floral Concepts by Tom and The Pizza Guy.

Despite gaining preliminary approval from the Community Preservation Association Committee (CPAC), an application from Coopers Common for historic preservation, rehabilitation and ADA improvements to the old Country Squire building on Main Street has garnered some objection from the public. Coopers owner Kathleen Gourde is seeking \$130,700 in funding from the committee to install a wheelchair lift to accommodate handicapped access to the second floor of the building as well as an exterior wheelchair ramp and ADA restrooms. Just before the council was set to vote on the matter, however, Gourde withdrew her request citing financial issues with her bank.

Though not in an official capacity yet, Agawam residents should get to know the face of state Sen. Michael Knapik, R-Westfield, who will officially begin representing Agawam moving forward after elections are held in November. The change is the result of redistricting as a result of the population shift.

The Agawam City Council Public Safety Subcommittee met to discuss the Halloween snowstorm and associated response. The committee came up with a number of concerns. Among them, questions regarding the town's emergency response plan, the location of a command center, and the delay in debris pickup.

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Christmas tree collection schedule

Should you wish to dispose of your tree prior to or after your scheduled collection day, yard waste passes for Bondi's Island Landfill are available at the Department of Public Works Monday through Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Senior Center's weekly calendar of events

Friday, Jan. 6: 9:15 a.m., Oil Painting; 9:30 a.m., Hand and Foot Card Game; 11:15 a.m., Yoga; Noon, Canasta; 1 p.m., Cribbage; 5 p.m., Zumba with Donna; 7:30 p.m., Applause Series at the Library (free).

Agawam Senior Center lunch menu

Friday, Jan. 6: Baked fish, scalloped potatoes, spinach, mixed fruit.

Senior Center Friends plan Jan. 4 meeting

To make a donation, send it to Friends of the Agawam Senior Center, c/o J. Emile Côté, 954 Main St., Agawam, MA 01001.

Notes from the Music Room

This group of musicians is involved in about 20 programs during the year and the public should not miss the next local performance.

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Public Safety

Editor's note: The Agawam Fire Dept. incident log for the week of Dec. 20 to 27 will appear in the Jan. 5, 2012 issue of the AAN.

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Families

Santa, is that you?



Turley Publications courtesy photo

Performing for friends and family, and on the look-out for Santa at the Festival of Trees held at Tower Square in downtown Springfield are, from left, Megan Fitzgerald, Donna Carrier, Ave Elais and Emily Scott, students at the Mary Ann Studio of Dance in Agawam.

Cats, kittens ready for adoption

WESTFIELD - The Westfield Homeless Cat project, a no kill rescue organization, has many cats and kittens ready for adoption. Adult cats are adopted at no charge to qualified homes that make a monetary donation of their choice to this rescue organization. During January, adoptions will be held at 1124 East Mountain Road, Westfield, Thursdays from 4 to 7 p.m., Saturdays from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m., and Sundays from noon to 3 p.m. The adoption process includes completing an application that is screened. Prospective adopters should email denisesinico@hotmail.com to get an application in advance. For more information, email this address or call (413) 568-6964.

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Daisy Troop reaches out at holiday time



Turley Publications courtesy photo

Members of Daisy Troop 11630 stopped to do a weather forecast while delivering Toys for Tots at a local television station recently.

The girls of Agawam Daisy Troop 11630 with girls from all four elementary schools in town, did two very special things this holiday season. They went to a local television station and delivered Toys for Tots and while there, did a live weather forecast along with a tour of the station, talking to several of the staff there.

The following week, they went to the Sisters of the Poor Saint Joseph nursing home and sang Christmas carols to the residents. The girls each made several drawings

and passed them out afterwards and spent time talking with the residents.

Troop members include Alyssa Gouvan, Kennedy Palmer, Hannah Manning, Bailey Gervais, Cora Edwards, Madison Bourgeois, Emily Quinones, Kiera Shannon, Guila Perella, Gianna Quick, and Paige Cook. The girls enjoyed helping other children and putting a smile on the faces of residents at the nursing home. Troop Leaders are Pam Gouvan and Jennifer Palmer.

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Flurry of Art Flow



Samantha LaPlante stands beside her “City Streak” imprinting, while Kaytee Crane showcases her self-portrait she created using pencils.



Caley McCaslin would like to attend college in Boston after graduation displays a colored pencil piece of Cape Cod. On the right, Riley Hellstein stands next to her piece that she used colored pencil to create.



Kevin Urban proudly displays his oil bar picture of Frank Sinatra.



Artfully crafted pieces impressed attendees.



Amber Greene, a junior, created “Dream Catcher” using print making techniques.



Tyler Templeman, a Senior, will be taking his artistic eye to new heights when he pursues a career in architecture.



Brittany Smith showcases

AGAWAM –Weeks before the holiday bells started ringing, students from Agawam High School decked the halls with boughs of artistry for the annual Winter Arts Festival. Students showcased their ingenuity and skill in the form of sketches, sculptures, pottery and more on Dec. 8.

You’ve
these

Arts and Crafts at Festival



Kaeli Howard stands by her oil bars picture of classic film star Audrey Hepburn.



Erek Brown created his polar bear out of plaster, while Casandra Land created “Frank” who was headed to the movies.



Not to hand it to the creative students who molded plaster creations.



Elizabeth Caraccioli (left) used “print making” for her final piece of John Lennon. Hope Murphy (right) enjoys art as a hobby and her ‘Janis Joplin’ piece was created with oil bars, but plans on attending Medical school in Boston after graduation.

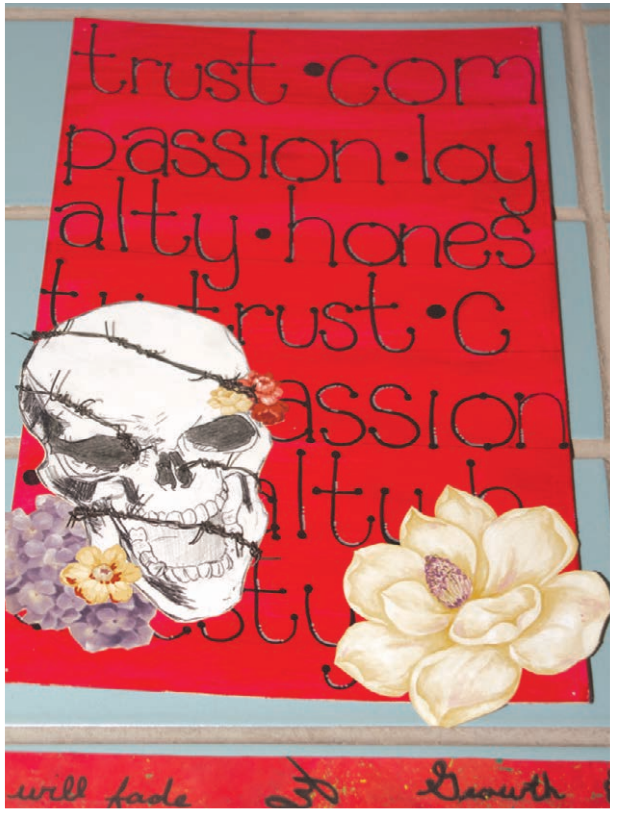
Turley Publications photos
by Connie J. Casagrande



colored pencil picture.



Will Marshall created an incredible picture with colored pencils of his teacher’s home as a present.



The young artists used many materials to create unified pieces.



SPORTS

Lady Brownies roll past Cathedral

By Gregory A. Scibelli
Turley Publications
Sports Correspondent

AGAWAM – In their third strong effort of the season, the Agawam girls basketball team picked up a 63-35 victory over visiting Cathedral on Monday night in the only game played the night following the Christmas holiday.

Agawam had three players score in double digits and played very well on defense and on the boards on both ends of the court. The Brownies also made better shots in the matchup.

They raised their record to 1-2 for the season after suffering losses against West Springfield and Central, both very strong programs this season.

Against Cathedral, Alycia Rackcliffe led the way with 14 points and Margaret Frawley and Samantha Howe each scored 12 points a piece.

Five others would score in the game for Agawam, making it a great all-around offensive effort the Brownies.

The Brownies would take an 18-8 lead to end the first quarter, capping off one of their best opening performances of the season. One of the biggest contributing factors to the early scoring was great shooting on the free throw line. During the first half, Agawam went 9 for 12 from the free throw line.

The Brownies also sank three 3-pointers in the opening half, including one from Rackcliffe, who opened the game with a great shot from the far right. Cathedral returned with a two-point field goal, which was reversed from an original three-point field goal.

From there, Agawam’s offense went on a tear that saw them build a 13-5 lead.

But things got even better in the second quarter even though Agawam only managed

Please see BASKETBALL, page 15



Agawam’s Alycia Rackcliffe is guarded heavily while trying to make a shot.

Agawam’s Alyssa Piotrowski makes a free throw during the first quarter of the Lady Brownies win over Cathedral Monday night.

Tigers hold off Agawam comeback attempt

By Gregory A. Scibelli
Turley Publications Sports Correspondent

AGAWAM – The rivalry between the Holyoke and Agawam High School hockey teams continues as Holyoke becomes South Hadley and the two teams renewed acquaintances two days before Christmas.

The result remained the same for Agawam, unfortunately, as they fell 3-2 to the newly-named Tigers. The score result was very familiar for the Brownies. The 3-2 score was the same in the last two Western Massachusetts Division 3A final.

The game didn’t reflect a typical Agawam-South Hadley matchup as the Tigers owned possession and the shot advantage for much of the first half of the game and built a strong 3-0 lead before the buzzer sounded for the end of the first period.

Chris Menard scored two goals for the Tigers during that first period, a couple of impressive scores that really got the South Hadley crowd going.

The first score came with just over a minute in the game. Menard would work around a couple of defenders and sneak a shot into the left side of the goal. The crafty wrist shot made it 1-0 South Hadley.

About four minutes into the game, Menard took the puck and made his way down the ice. He was met by an Agawam defender’s stick and fumbled the puck. Menard managed to recover from the play and advanced to the goal and made a great shot to the upper left of the goal to make it 2-0 South Hadley.

The third goal came several minutes later with 3:59 remaining. This time, it was a power play goal for the Tigers

that led to the score as Doug Sattler made a great shot on a set play.

Sattler was waiting on the right side of the Agawam goal and took a pass from Menard that made it through several players. Sattler received the puck and one-timed it into the open part of the net.

South Hadley made 14 shots in the first period, but Agawam only managed to get one shot on goal.

Please see HOCKEY, page 16



South Hadley’s Doug Sattler faces off against an Agawam center.

Agawam Soccer launches online registration system

AGAWAM - Agawam Soccer Association has had a busy winter improving many aspects of the organization to include new online registration system, new website, and overhaul of in-town playing structure.

The main part of the work put in by the association was the commitment to introduce a fully online registration and team management program that will streamline registrations and help organize all functions of the entire organization. The program was necessary due to the large amounts of registrations and to organize and produce an improved playing experience for the players in the league.

“We had to make some changes to the registration process,” said league president Brian Regnier, “We have had an enormous amount of paper to organize. We register over 1,000 kids per season and it just got to be too much for volunteers to keep organized. We have a system in place that will really help us and take us to the next level as an organization.”

The system that is being used is fully done online at www.agawamsoccer.org. Parents can log onto the website and create an account under the “sign up” tab on the site. From here the parents will enter all the information on the player and parents.

Please see SOCCER, page 16

ATHLETE *of the Week*

Basile looking to bring home Western Mass crown

By Gregory A. Scibelli
Turley Publications
Sports Correspondent

AGAWAM – For the second straight season, Agawam grappler Patsy Basile is off to a strong start and has just a couple of losses on the season while picking up some impressive wins against quality opponents to start the year.

Basile has a great presence on the mat and is a contender once again for the Western Massachusetts Division 1 championship. He will compete at 126 pounds under the new, revised weight classes for this season.

Basile is the choice to be the Agawam Advertiser News Athlete of the Week.

Wrestling since he was in first grade, Basile went through the Agawam Youth Wrestling program and participated in several tournaments, winning some local regional tournaments.

He said wrestling was a family activity, and some they wanted him to try.

“My cousins were wrestling and they thought it would be good if I tried it,” said Basile, who also plays lacrosse and football.

Basile entered the high school as a member of the junior varsity and competed in several matches at 103 pounds that were dubbed as JV contests taking place before or after dual meets. When graduation opened up several weight classes, Basile started competing for the varsity at 125 pounds last year as a sophomore.

Basile picked up several impressive wins and made it to compete for fifth place in the sectional championships, but was forced to forfeit due to a concussion he suffered during the tournament.

This year, he is back and says he’s looking forward to trying to place in the top three in his weight class. He says a wrestler from Putnam has a good chance of winning the title, and he needs to finesse the strong grappler to beat him for the first time.

Basile is all about his starts on the mat, saying two positions work for him while one leaves him vulnerable.

“I do well when I’m in the up position or neutral,” said Basile. “But I have a tough time if I am in the down referee’s position.”

Basile says his team has a lot of great experience at several weight classes that makes up for the lack of depth at some others. He believes his team has a great chance at getting back into the team tournament this season. Agawam was the sixth seed last year and lost in the quarterfinals.

Basile plans to attend college and says he is considering the University of Massachusetts. He is unsure of what career path he may follow.



Turley Publications photo by Gregory A. Scibelli

Wrestling since he was in first grade, Patsy Basile went through the Agawam Youth Wrestling program and has won some regional tournaments.

PVIAC fall all-stars

The following athletes from Agawam were named to their respective sports all-star squad.

NAME	SPORT
Mike Andre	Cross Country
Megan Dustin	Cross Country
Gina Lopez	Cross Country
Ashley Monohan	Cross Country
Hailey Piotrowski	Cross Country
Tyler Roberts	Cross Country
Brooke Walsh	Cross Country
Jillian Newton	Field Hockey
Kristina Kopyscinski	Field Hockey
Lauren Brodeur	Field Hockey
Megan Cecchi	Field Hockey
Steve DePalma	Football
AJ Efstratios	Football
Cian O’Sullivan	Boys Soccer
Mike Cortese	Boys Soccer
Kyle Multi	Boys Soccer
Collin Ritter	Boys Soccer
Riley Hellstein	Girls Soccer
Leah Dominique	Girls Soccer
Kara Peters	Girls Soccer
Leisl Bard	Girls Soccer
Sam Butt	Girls Soccer
Alycia Rackliff	Girls Volleyball

BASKETBALL, from page 14

to grab 10 more points. It was the defense, which held Cathedral to just one layup with 45 seconds remaining in the second quarter that was most impressive for the Brownies.

Agawam led 28-10 at halftime.

Their offense picked up right back up during the third quarter as they another 18 spot on the scoreboard followed by 17 points in the fourth.

Cathedral managed to get some offense in during the third, but were held to single digits in the fourth as Agawam’s bench played some good defense.

The Panthers were led by Taylor Rooney with 14 points.

The Brownies suffered a tough loss against Central last Thursday night, losing 41-25. While the Brownies had trouble scoring in the game and were held to single digits in each quarter, Central was limited in their scoring as well, with Agawam’s playing the Golden Eagles as tough as they can.

The Brownies will next take the court tonight at 5:30 p.m. at East Longmeadow. The boys game at East Longmeadow will follow the girls at 7 p.m.

Gregory A. Scibelli is a sports correspondent for Turley Publications. He can be reached at gscibelli@turley.com.



Turley Publications photo by Gregory A. Scibelli

Agawam’s Paige Preston attempts to guard a Cathedral forward. Defense was the key to Agawam’s first win of the season.

Sports Calendar

Discount hockey tickets available at Parks and Rec.

AGAWAM - The Agawam Parks and Recreation Department is offering discount tickets to the Springfield Falcons hockey games. A discounted one-price voucher can be purchased for \$11 each at the Parks and Recreation Department and may be exchanged at the Falcons box office at any time for the home game of your choice.

For Springfield Falcons team information and schedule, visit falconsahl.com.

To purchase vouchers, go to the Parks and Recreation Department at 1000 Suffield St. or call 821-0513.

AHS Alumni Hockey Game scheduled

AGAWAM - The annual Agawam High School Alumni Hockey Game will be held Saturday, Dec. 31 at 11 a.m. at Cyr Arena

located in Springfield’s Forest Park.

The game is open to any and all former AHS hockey players.

Anyone interested is asked to RSVP by Dec. 15 to agawamhockey@hotmail.com and send the \$25 fee payable to the Agawam Hockey Booster Club, c/o 248 Pearl St., Enfield, CT 06082.

Winter brochure now available

AGAWAM - The Agawam Parks and Recreation 2012 Winter Brochure is now available online at www.agawam.ma.us.

To get your organization’s information placed in the Agawam Advertiser News, contact Sports Editor Dave Forbes at 413-283-8393 ext. 237 or send an email to dforbes@turley.com.

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HOCKEY, from page 14

wam’s defense would play very well during the second and third periods to help get the Brownies back into the game.

The Brownies would score single tallies in each period. Both of those goals came from Corey Jenks, who has been on fire since the season started. He managed to get past South Hadley’s Devin Hoagland, who made 28 saves for the Tigers.

Jenks has now scored six of Agawam’s 10 goals in four games this season.

Agawam dropped to 2-2 this season while the Tigers advanced to 4-0. The two teams



Two Agawam players pursue South Hadley’s Spencer Nawrocki.

SOCCER, from page 14

The information will be used to create rosters, give coaches contact information, and create a communication tool for the organization to communicate with all of the members. It will also give the league full control over the player’s status and team assignment.

Parents will be able to sign-up online and pay with a credit card for a small fee, or sign up online and mail in a check. Parents mailing in checks will only be guaranteed a spot if the check is received within five days of the deadline for signups.

The security on the website is state-of-the-art and designed exclusively by Whalley Computers.

One main issue the organization was having was the enormous amount of late registrations.

“We had 40 percent of the league signup past the registration deadline in the fall,” explained Regnier. “It caused major issues in the league from coaches, to adding teams, to lack of uniforms. It’s like nothing I have ever seen. It hurt the playing experience for some players because we had to overload some teams to not turn players away. This system will set limits for teams and once its full there won’t be any more registrations. The only way to guarantee a spot is to sign up on time. We are going to set the amount of teams on the deadline and from there we will just fill in open roster spots so signing up on time will be important unless we have room to add players.”

Agawam Soccer has also redone a website that will add many new functions to modernize the league. The website is still under construction as volunteers continue to train on the site, but the main components are in place and players are able to register. The website will include on line schedules, league updates, and team pages. The system will be much easier for coaches to update and maintain.

The website’s many tools will help modernize and gown the association’s communication within the league.

One of the biggest changes to the league will be in the in-town structure and playing

are not in the same league and will not meet again in the regular season. South Hadley, the former Holyoke, has four playoff wins in four consecutive seasons against Agawam.

The Brownies play a road game against West Springfield Friday at 4:30 p.m. at the MassMutual Center in Springfield. Anyone attending the game can pay \$10 and see both the Brownies and later, the Springfield Falcons.

Gregory A. Scibelli is a sports correspondent for Turley Publications. He can be reached at gscibelli@turley.com.

fields that will be changed in the spring.

“We had to make some changes,” said Regnier. “The game of soccer is fun and dynamic and we plan on emphasizing that this upcoming season.”

The league will adopt the playing structure recommended by U.S. Youth Soccer and fully implement them into the Agawam Soccer program.

“We had many meetings with professionals and spent many hours on trying to improve the playing experience and development of our players. How do we keep it fun and teach them more. The more we researched the more we came to realize that U.S. Youth Soccer already had it figured out, so we implemented it.”

The main changes will be that the Pre-K and K league will be 3 versus 3 with no keepers and U7 and U8 will be 4 versus 4 with no keepers.

“This is the universal system for teaching the game. More touches on the ball, more goals, and less rules,” said Regnier. “The emphasis will be in the development, and constant playing of the game. It’s going to be very exciting to watch and the kids will have a blast. They will get so much better and not even realize it is our expectation.”

The new structure and rules will be formatted on the new website prior to the start of the season and coaches will have a meeting prior to the season to go over what they will be and how to manage them.

Agawam Soccer as a whole has seen a large surge in numbers and in success.

The youth organization has had record numbers and has grown over the past few seasons. The Pioneer Valley teams have had much success in developing players and with team success this past fall. This past fall play-offs saw five Agawam teams in the Western Mass playoffs with both the U14 girls and boys reaching the Division 1 finals. The girls captured the Division 1 title in penalty kicks while the boys lost a heartbreaker in sudden death penalty kicks. The high school teams saw both the girls’ and boys’ varsity teams make the Western Mass Tournament with the girls upsetting Ludlow and the boys falling valiantly to Amherst.



Turley Publications photos by Gregory A. Scibelli

Three Agawam players protect goalie Anthony Ascoti.

The Beanepot

by Carl Beane

Lockout did nothing to help NBA



Hello ladies and gentlemen boys and girls and welcome to the Beanepot. Here’s hoping you all had a great Christmas or whatever holiday you celebrate. We will turn our attention this week to the Boston Celtics. If you haven’t been staying current with them they are really in a tough spot thanks to that ridiculous lockout carried on recently by the NBA.

During the work stoppage the league had a chance to change the entire structure of the set up on how teams are put together. In earlier columns it was discussed that the opportunity to force a hard cap in order to put some sanity was there and it was not even addressed.

Here is the problem: there are teams that will never get better due to the fact that athletes simply do not want to play and live there. I don’t mean places like say Milwaukee or Detroit, but even such a storied franchise such as Boston. Why? Simple, the six or eight players that can have a huge impact on a team all want to play in L.A. so they can get a reality show and warm weather. Same holds true with Miami with the lure of babes, big bucks,

extra money and weather gets it done. Boston has great history, a great coach and great fans BUT it isn’t Hollywood or South Beach. Enticing great players to come to Boston is virtually impossible so when Ray Allen, Paul Pierce and Kevin Garnett are done, so are the Celtics for the foreseeable future

So if this is what is going to happen to Boston, think of what the future holds for Portland or Oklahoma City or Utah just to name a few. I can tell you this, it isn’t promising at all. The NBA is hemorrhaging money and if this isn’t somehow put under some kind of player control the pro sport can and will fall apart. If that happens the players will be the ones to suffer along with the fans and that would be a shame.

Lastly I want to take a moment to thank all the readers of this spaced every week. I appreciate your comments. Whether you agree or disagree with what is written I learn from you all. Please have a safe and Happy New Year. Amen

Carl Beane can be reached at cbeane@carlbeane.com or via his website www.carlbeane.com.

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Obituaries & Church News

MICHAEL H. DONAHOE

Michael H. Donahoe, of Agawam, died Thursday, Dec. 22, 2011 surrounded by family and friends in Baystate Medical Center. Mike was born in Norwich, Conn., the son of Joseph and Mary (Woods) Donahoe. He grew up in Norwich and has lived in the Springfield area most of his life. A graduate of Canterbury Prep School in New Milford, Conn., he went on to graduate from Providence College and received his master's degree from Springfield College. Mike was the former Director of Alcoholism and Drug Services and also served as a counselor with the program. He was a member of the Board of Directors for the Mental Health Association and Friends of the Homeless. Mike retired from the United States Army Reserve as a lieutenant colonel after 20 years of service. He leaves his wife, Mary (Begley) Donahoe; a son, Christopher Michael Donahoe of Hawaii; a daughter, Mary Elisabeth Stock of San Diego, Calif.; two sisters, Sheila Connell of Norfolk, Va. and Catharine Smith of Destin, Fla.; and six grandchildren, Alexander, Michael, Emileigh, Hannah, Rylie and Cambell. Besides his parents, Mike was predeceased by his sister Jo-Ann Shirer, who died Dec. 9, 2011. Services were held at West Springfield Curran-Jones Funeral Home with private burial in the Massachusetts Veterans Memorial Cemetery. Donations may be made to the Friends of the Homeless, 755 Worthington St., Springfield, 01105 or to the Mental Health Association, 995 Worthington St., Springfield, MA 01109.

EVELYN KOZIOL

Evelyn Koziol, 54, of Agawam, passed away peacefully following a courageous battle with cancer Saturday, Dec. 24, 2011 at home surrounded by her loving family and friends. Born April 19, 1957 in Chicopee, she is the daughter of Helen M. (Cassidy) and the late Joseph T. Kennedy. She was a homemaker most her life, and resided in Agawam since 1988. Evelyn is survived by her loving husband Bob; and son Bobby, both of Agawam. She will also be missed by her sisters Nora Lafortune and her husband, Craig of Granby, and Ellie Kennedy-Vigness of Abilene, Texas; her mother, Helen Kennedy of Granby; brother-in-law Ed Koziol and his wife, Helen of Montgomery; devoted companion Rocky; several nieces, nephews and

other loving relatives and friends. A funeral service for Evelyn will be held Friday, Dec. 30 beginning at 9 a.m. from Colonial Forastiere Funeral Home, 985 Main St., Agawam with a Liturgy of Christian Burial, to be celebrated at 10 a.m. in St. John the Evangelist Church, Agawam. A private interment will be held at the convenience of the family. Calling hours will be held from 4-8PM on Thursday, Dec. 29 at the funeral home.

ANNA J. MOLTA

Anna J. (Wojtowicz) Molta, 100, of Agawam, died Sunday, Christmas Day in a local nursing home. Anna was born in Springfield, the daughter of the late Thomas and Catherine (Skowron) Wojtowicz and had lived in Agawam since 1948. She was a communicant of St. John the Evangelist Church and member of the Agawam Senior Center. Anna enjoyed knitting and crocheting, spending time with family and playing cards with her grandchildren and great-grandchildren. Her husband, John P. Molta died in 1989; and a son, John G. Molta died in 2008. She leaves her children, Daniel Molta and his wife Nancy of Sturbridge, Kenneth Molta and his wife Candace of Florida and Gloria Anderson and her husband Joe of Agawam. She also leaves a sister, Jennie Szarlan of Ludlow; eight grandchildren; and 16 great-grandchildren. She was also predeceased by a sister, Helen Guzik; and three brothers, Steve, Frank, and Mitchell Wojtowicz. The funeral was held at the Agawam Curran-Jones Funeral Home with Liturgy in St. John the Evangelist Church followed by burial in Hillcrest Park Cemetery. Memorial contributions may be made to Country Estates Nursing Home's Activity Account, 1200 Suffield St., Agawam 01001.

LYDIA A. PETRONE

Lydia A. Petrone, 77, of Agawam, entered into eternal rest Thursday, Dec. 22, 2011 at home surrounded by her family. Born in Westfield, daughter of the late Joseph and Adelina (Masciadrelli) Chistolini, she lived in Agawam for 54 years. Lydia worked for over 20 years at United Bank as a consolidated loan specialist. She also worked at the Italian Kitchen at the Big E for many years.



She was a member of the Caspano Club in Westfield, the Italian Cultural Center of Western Massachusetts in Springfield and the Massachusetts Counseling Center for the Aging. She was a communicant of St. John the Evangelist Church and an avid Boston Red Sox fan. She leaves her husband of 54 years, Bernard Petrone; two sons and their wives, Bernard C. and Mary Petrone of Westfield, Michael J. and Kelli Petrone of Enfield; two daughters and their husbands, Celeste M. and Kenneth Fersch of East Granby, Conn., and Judy A. and Michael Brunelle of Feeding Hills; a sister, Mary Bazanchuk of Westfield; 13 grandchildren, Jessica, Michael, Stephanie, Jacob, Noah, Samuel, Joseph, Luke, Christopher, Megan, Nicholas, Thomas, Eli; and three great-grandchildren, Traigh, Will and Ben. The funeral was from the Agawam Funeral Home with a Mass in St. John the Evangelist Church and burial in Agawam Center Cemetery. Donations may be made to the Baystate Visiting Nurse & Hospice, c/o Baystate Health Foundation, 280 Chestnut St., 6th Floor, Springfield, MA 01199.

ELAINE M. SMITH

Elaine M. (Dalla Pegorara) Smith, 67, of Agawam, entered into eternal rest Wednesday, Dec. 21, 2011 in Mercy Medical Center. Born in Springfield, daughter of the late Albino and Maria Martha (Monty) Dalla Pegorara, she moved to Agawam in 1948 and was a 1963 graduate of Agawam High School. Elaine was the owner of the former Fleur de Laine flower shop for 20 years. She had a degree in Oriental floral design from the Sogetsu Ikebana School, Okinawa, Japan and Western Floral Design from New York State University. Elaine was a member of the Agawam Women's Club, the Agawam Catholic Women's Club, the Agawam Garden Club, the Friends of the Senior Center and a member of both the Agawam Golden Age Club Chapter 1 and 2. She was a communicant and Eucharistic Minister at St. John the

Evangelist Church and assisted in distributing communion at Heritage Hall Nursing Home. She also had worked at Chez Josef as their floral designer. Elaine would like to say thank you to all the people she met throughout the years and may God be with you. She leaves her husband of 47 years, Richard A. Smith; two sons, Ronald D. and his wife Evelyn Smith of Agawam, and Jeffrey A. Smith of San Jose, Calif.; two sisters, Theresa O'Shaughnessy of Agawam, and Diane Dalla Pegorara of Hawaii; two grandchildren, Aaron and Jessie Smith; an uncle, Archie Dalla Pegorara; and an aunt, Bruna Morassi, both of Agawam. The funeral was from the Agawam Funeral Home with a Mass in St. John the Evangelist Church and burial in the Massachusetts Veterans Memorial Cemetery. Donations may be made to the Adult & Children's Religious Education Program at St. John's Church, 833 Main Street, Agawam, MA 01001.

RALPH USIFER

Ralph Usifer, of Agawam, loving husband of Jennie Usifer, passed away Saturday, Dec. 24, 2011 at Mercy Hospital in Springfield. He had lived in Agawam since 1988. Ralph was born in 1918 in Beacon, N.Y., son of Anthony and Vincenza Ucciferri. He grew up in Beacon and Brooklyn, N.Y., where he graduated from Brooklyn College with a degree in social science. He worked in Wall Street for several years, and then started a career at BBDO Advertising on Madison Avenue in the early days of television. Ralph moved to this area in 1967 and started his own advertising agency. His many clients included Sears, Dreikorn's Bread, and Baystate Gas. Ralph was proud of his work and his family, especially his beloved grandchildren. Along with his wife, Ralph leaves a son Richard and wife Raisa of South Windsor and their son, Sam; son Douglas and wife Maureen of Belle Mead, N.J. and their sons, Matt and Joey; daughter Laura Riccio and husband Mike of Seattle, Wash. and their daughter Emily and son Ben; a stepson, David Paul of Woodland, Calif.; and former wife Nancy Usifer of Somers. A memorial service was held at Wapping Community Church, South Windsor, Conn., with burial at Hillcrest Park Cemetery, Springfield. Memorial contributions may be sent to The Friends of the Agawam Senior Center, 954 Main St., Agawam, MA 01001. Colonial Forastiere Funeral Home, Agawam had care of arrangements.

News and events at Agawam Congregational Church

The Agawam Congregational Church welcomed the following new members on Sunday, Dec. 11 - Greg and Somchai Daniels, Robert Rossmeisl, Jennifer Burgess, David Prova, Barbara Hermans, Jeanne Allard, Ray and Nancy Williams Jr., Ray and Barbara Williams Sr. and Shirley Parker.

The public is invited to attend Agawam Congregational. Sunday services are held at 10 a.m. with fellowship and coffee hour following.

Playgroup meets on Tuesday mornings from 9:30 to 11 a.m. in the nursery. It is for children from birth to five years old with a parent or caregiver. The public is invited to join for crafts, stories, songs, free-play and more. It is open to the public at no cost and newcomers are welcome.

The youth group meets Sunday evenings from 6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. It is for seventh-through 12th-graders. For more information, call Jody Seldomridge, youth leader, in the church office.

Epiphany Communion Sunday will be celebrated Sunday, Jan. 1. There will be no church school, but coffee hour will take place after the service.

Church services on Sunday, Jan. 8 10 will include a children's message, and will be followed by a budget meeting of the congregation. Church school will be in session as well as coffee hour.

The Fellowship Guild will meet Thursday, Jan. 12 with Barbara Eisenbach presenting a program on the "Women of Faith."

Loaves and Fishes takes place Monday, Jan. 16 at 4 p.m. Helpers are welcome.

Men's Ministry meets Saturday, Jan. 21 at 7:30 a.m. and at 5:30 p.m., there will be a pork supper. Cost for adults is \$12; \$6 for children. Call the church office to make reservations.

The Women's Ministry meets Monday Jan. 23 at 7 p.m.

Sunday, Jan. 29 is "Undies Sunday." New underwear for the Springfield Rescue Mission will be collected.

Pastor Earl and his wife Barbara are always available for prayer after the service. Members of the community are invited to participate in all church events. For more information, call the church office at 786-7111. Regular office hours are Monday through Friday 8 a.m. to noon.

Space available for tag, craft, bake sale

Sacred Heart Parish in Feeding Hills will host a Winter Tag, Craft and Bake Sale on Saturday, Jan. 14 from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. The cost of a table is \$20, which the parish will provide. To reserve a table, call the parish office at 786-8200.



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Our community businesses have been the heartbeat of Main Street America for generations. And, when asked to name a favorite restaurant, service, or shop - you're sure to cite a unique local business.

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Think outside of the big box – support community businesses.

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In the Classroom

Lemanski finalist for South Hadley superintendent position

SOUTH HADLEY — The selection process for finding a new Superintendent of Schools for South Hadley moved into its next phase last week with a familiar face among the candidates: Agawam High School Principal Steven Lemanski.

A 13-person Superintendent Search Screening Committee met for many hours during the last five weeks to review 20 applications and select the most promising prospects to interview for the position.

At the conclusion of 10 interviews held between Dec. 5 and 14, the search committee selected a slate of five finalists for further consideration by the South Hadley School Committee, including Lemanski.

Steven Lemanski began his career as a recreation supervisor for 10 years with the Massachusetts Department of Youth Services, and starting in 1995 held positions of high school physical education teacher, peer mediation



Steven Lemanski

coordinator, department supervisor and director of athletics in the Chicopee Public Schools. In December 2004 he became Assistant Principal at Agawam High School and in March of 2007, he was appointed as principal there.

A South Hadley resident, Lemanski earned a bachelor's degree in physical education and health from Springfield College in 1982 and a Masters of Education Degree from the University of Massachusetts in 1999.

Lemanski and the other finalists for the position will be scheduled for a daylong visit to South Hadley starting Jan. 4. Then, each candidate will be given the opportunity to tour each school while in session, and meet with parents and the community.

Interviews will be conducted during public meetings of the School Committee on Jan. 4, 10 and 12. A specific time schedule for interviews was not announced at presstime.

Sowinska inducted into 'Who's Who'

SPRINGFIELD - Karolina Sowinska, of Agawam, was among 26 students at American International College recently recognized for their campus and community involvement. The 26 students were inducted into "Who's Who Among Students at American Universities and Colleges."

Families, friends, faculty and staff filled the Bradley Room on Thursday, Nov. 10 for the ceremony, as Blaine K. Students, vice president for Student Affairs at AIC, presented each student with a plaque.

Sowinska is a psychology and international studies major, the International Club president, History Club vice president, Psi Chi activities coordinator, editor of the Taper Yearbook, History Club vice president, and senior class representative.

Students are nominated for inclusion in Who's Who by campus committees and directory editors on the basis of academic achievement, service to their community, leadership in extracurricular activities and potential for continued success.

Business

Park Square agents recognized at luncheon

The Realtor Association of Pioneer Valley held its their annual holiday luncheon at Chez Josef Tuesday, Dec. 13. Several Park Square Realty agents were recognized for their years of continuous service as realtors.

Ted Cassell, president of Park Square Realty, announced last week that the following agents in the Feeding Hills Office were honored for their years of continuous service to the Realtor Association of Pioneer Valley. They include Shirley Kibbe, for 30 years of service; Pam Savioli and Joanne Kean, for 25 years of continuous service; and Dee Cyr and Erica Herbert for their 10 years of continuous service.

Barry Boccasile, director of Growth and Development for Park Square Realty, announced that Peg Lis-Barone from the Westfield office was honored with 25 years of continuous service and Paula Waldroup was honored for 15 years.

Park Square Realty is a locally owned residential real estate company with offices in Westfield and Feeding Hills and can be seen online at parksquarerealty.com.



Shirley Kibbe



Pam Savioli



Joanne Kean



Turley Publications courtesy photos
Erica Herbert



Dee Cyr



Peg Lis-Barone



Paula Waldroup

HOW TO SUBMIT LEGAL NOTICES

All legal notices to be published in the *Agawam Advertiser News* should be sent directly to klanier@turley.com. Karen Lanier processes all legals for this newspaper and can answer all of your questions regarding these notices. Please indicate the newspapers and publication date(s) for the notice(s) in the subject line of your email. For questions regarding coverage area, procedures or cost, please call Karen directly at 413-283-8393 x271.

Turley Publications, Inc. publishes 15 weekly newspapers throughout Western Massachusetts. Visit www.turley.com for more information.



Turley Publications courtesy photo

Butler joins Ayre Real Estate

Ayre Real Estate Co., Inc. announced recently that Michael Butler joined its firm. For the past 10 years, Butler has owned and operated The Outback Steakhouse in West Springfield. He has been involved with raising money for the Network Against Domestic Abuse, DCF, Shriners Hospital for Children and the March of Dimes for the past eight years. Butler is married and has three children.

Two AHS seniors recognized for school, community efforts

By Mike Lydick
Turley Publications Correspondent

AGAWAM –Agawam High School students Jillian Newton and Jeffrey Rovatti Jr. excel academically and athletically. They are also civic minded, and actively give back to their community. Additionally, the two seniors are also the only students in their class who share in a special honor: they are recipients of a very prestigious award. Both Rovatti and Newton were recently presented with the Massachusetts Association of School Superintendents (MASS) Certificate of Academic Excellence Award by interim Superintendent William Sapelli. Each year, the award is given by local school superintendents to recognize senior students who have distinguished themselves in high school.

According to Sapelli, the award criterion includes the student’s three-year cumulative average of his or her rank in class and overall school citizenship.

“This is a high honor for students,” said Agawam’s top school administrator during the award presentation at the Nov. 22. school committee meeting.

The award is presented each fall at the beginning of the senior year so students can include this unique citation on their credential packages and counselor recommendations when applying for college.

Sapelli said that Newton and Rovatti were “excellent candidates” for the award, with extremely close grade point averages (GPA) – Rovatti has a 4.40 GPA and Newton has a 4.38 GPA –they rank number three and four, respectively, in their class.

Students who are currently ranked first and second in their class generally are not selected for the award, said Sapelli, because those students will most likely receive the valedictorian and salutatorian awards in June.

Newton said that the award is “a great honor,” and that it was a pleasant surprise to receive the letter from Sapelli notifying her of the award. Throughout her high school career, Newton has taken 13 honors courses as well as four Advanced Placement (AP) and while she is a former class officer, she is still

involved with student government and also belongs to both the National Honors Society and the Spanish National Honors Society. But above all, her favorite extracurricular activity is playing varsity field hockey.

“I’m a field hockey player, first and foremost, at school,” said Newton, who also officiates at youth field hockey and lacrosse games. “I’ve played throughout my childhood and throughout high school. My coach, Coach Huestis, has been an outstanding influence on me during my years at AHS.”

Similarly, Rovatti said receiving the award “feels good,” and that he is pleased “to be recognized for my academic success and hard work.” That hard work includes taking eight AP courses and 15 honors courses.

For his extracurricular activities, Rovatti enjoys playing for the varsity golf team and is a member of both the computer programming team and the chess club. He is also a former member of the AHS concert and marching bands.

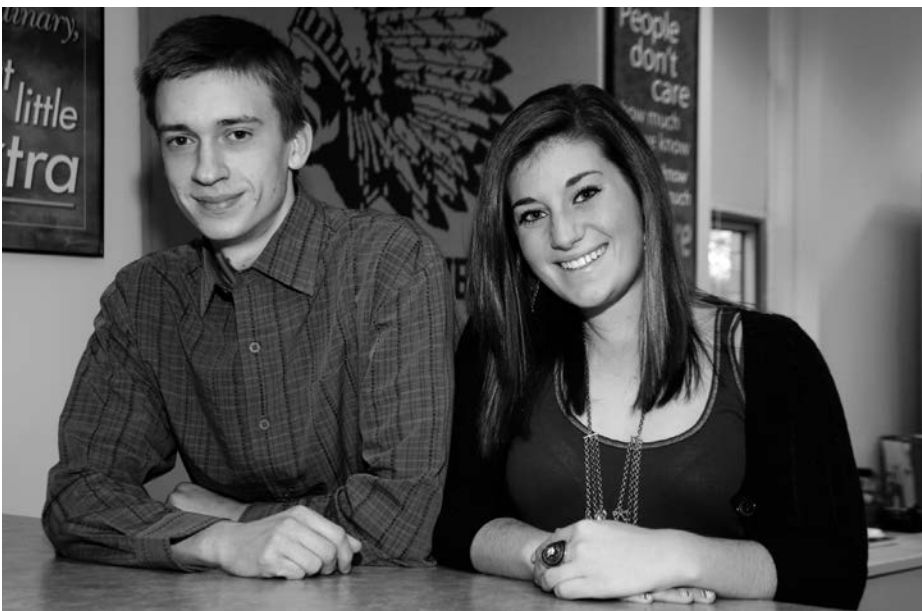
Both students also take time outside of their busy school schedules to participate in a number of community activities and programs.

Newton’s volunteer activities include co-coordinating the AHS Mini-Relay for Life, helping with tornado clean-up efforts in Springfield, working with the Agawam Lions Club, and assisting with the annual Agawam Athletic Department Golf Tournament.

And Rovatti’s community activities involve volunteering as a lector, musician, and director of altar servers for Our Lady of the Rosary Church in Springfield; serving as vice president of Springfield’s Saint Stanislaus Brotherly Aid Society; and assisting with a food drive for the Springfield Rescue Mission.

All in all, both Newton’s and Rovatti’s future career potential is beaming bright.

For Newton, she plans to hold a career in the business world where she can combine her strong interpersonal skills with her love of math. She has been accepted at Providence College and the University of Hartford, but said she is hoping to be accepted at Trinity College in Hartford.



Turley Publications photo by Mike Lydick

Agawam High School students Jeffrey Rovatti Jr. and Jillian Newton recently received the Massachusetts Association of School Superintendents (MASS) Certificate of Academic Excellence Award, which was presented by interim Superintendent William Sapelli at the Nov. 22 school committee meeting. The award is given each year to recognize seniors who have distinguished themselves in high school.

“I’ve had wonderful teachers with whom I’ve created some great relationships,” she said. “I’ve received a solid education that I know will help me when I get to college. This award shows colleges that I’ve excelled and stood out in more than just my academics at AHS.”

Rovatti’s career goals lie within the medical field. And to help kick off that career, he hopes to attend Western New England University, to better develop his interest in pharmaceutical research.

“I feel well prepared for my future endeavors and higher education because of my teachers and my education in Agawam,” he said.

Both of the students’ parents said that the award is important because it recognizes

academic statistics as well as community activities and leadership ability.

“My wife Kathleen and I are very excited and happy for Jeff,” said Jeffrey Rovatti Sr. “We’re very proud of his academic successes. He is a conscientious person who takes his activities in and out of school very seriously.”

“We see how hard Jill works in all aspects of her life, so she is most deserving of this award,” said Sue Newton. “My husband Paul and I couldn’t be more proud of her. We’re extremely happy that she received recognition for all her efforts.”

AHS Principal Steve Lemanski added that Newton and Rovatti are “outstanding school citizens” who are making a difference in school and in the community.

Food safety focus of Annual FLL Tournament

Agawam High School’s FIRST Team 839 “Rosie Robotics” hosted its fourth Annual FIRST LEGO League (FLL) tournament at Agawam Junior High School Saturday, Dec. 10. Rosie hosts this tournament every year to serve as a role model and inspire the younger members of the FIRST community. FLL is targeted to elementary, middle and junior high school students. The tournament included 21 teams of up to 10 students each from Massachusetts.

The focus of the game was food safety. Students were given a series of missions to complete within the allotted 2 ½-minute period. These missions were used to test the students’ capacity for accomplishing the tasks in a timely manner while trying to gain the maximum point value in order to advance forward into the finals. The missions were designed in themed challenges that would teach the students proper sanitization methods, from being harvested at the food source to the delivery to stores, all the way to the kitchen counter.

In addition to building and competing with the robot, teams had to complete a research project that involved matters pertaining to the game theme. They were asked about

their ideas on how to further the sanitization methods that go into the transportation of goods and were also questioned on FIRST Core Values, which are meant to teach the children at a young age to work together with one another and their mentors/coaches and still have fun, in the spirit of “gracious professionalism.”

The winning team in the robot tournament was Agawam’s “Brick Heads,” mentored by fellow Rosie member Katie McDonald. In addition, there were three Junior FIRST LEGO League teams from Agawam, which included first- and second-graders, who also had to build a LEGO machine and create and display a research project.

The event was a group effort by many adults, Rosie students and Agawam Junior High student volunteers. The Agawam Lions Club assisted by providing all the concession stand services. Volunteers included Town Councilor-Elect Cecelia Calabrese, Agawam teacher Tammy Rumplick, and School Committee member-elect Wendy Rua. Interim Superintendent of Schools William Sapelli showed his support for the eager young students by attending the event.

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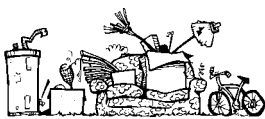
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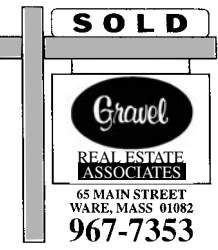
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ALL REAL ESTATE advertised herein is subject to the Federal Fair Housing Act, which makes it illegal to advertise "any preference, limitation, or discrimination because of race, color, religion, sex, handicap, familial status, or national origin, or intention to make any such preference, limitation, or discrimination." We will not knowingly accept any advertising for real estate which is in violation of the law. All persons are hereby informed that all dwellings advertised are available on an equal opportunity basis.

CHICOPEE 3RD FLOOR, 2 bedrooms, heat, hot water & appliances, a/c, laundry room. off-street parking. \$850 No pets/smoking. **(413)222-8293.**

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INDIAN ORCHARD 5 room, heat & hot water included. Stove & refrigerator. Near bus line. \$775/mo. 1st and last. **(413)543-5326.**

For Rent



FOR RENT

All real estate advertising in this newspaper is subject to the Federal Fair Housing Act of 1968, which makes it illegal to advertise any preference, limitation or discrimination based on race, color, religion, sex, handicap, familial status (number of children and or pregnancy), national origin, ancestry, age, marital status, or any intention to make any such preference, limitation or discrimination.

This newspaper will not knowingly accept any advertising for real estate that is in violation of the law. Our readers are hereby informed that all dwellings advertising in this newspaper are available on an equal opportunity basis. To complain about discrimination call The Department of Housing and Urban Development "HUD" toll-free at 1-800-669-9777. For the N.E. area, call HUD at 617-565-5308. The toll free number for the hearing impaired is 1-800-927-9275.

LUDLOW 4 ROOM TOWNHOUSE apt. w/2 bdms, 1.5 baths, central A/C, gas heat, stove & refrig. \$900 monthly rent plus utilities. No pets or waterbeds. First, last and security deposit required. **(413)583-3097 or (413)583-6424.**

PALMER 4 RM, 1 BR, office. Renovated, new windows. Free heat, HW, Appliances. \$785 No Pets. No Smoking **(508)637-1520, (860)658-2101**

PALMER BONDSVILLE 1 & 2 bedrooms \$650 & \$750 mo. includes heat & HW, parking available, on site laundry. No pets. Available 1/1/2012 **(413)736-8987**

PALMER THREE RIVERS. Country Manor apartments, 1 bdrm, \$630, 2 bdrm, \$730 month. All units renov. w/disposal, dishwashers, microwave, elec. range, carpets. Parking, fishing and playground. Cats okay. Call **413-283-9472.**

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For Rent

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SPRINGFIELD 1 BEDROOM \$650, 2 BR \$750, heat, HW included. On site laundry. Available immediately. **(413)736-8987**

THORNDIKE 3 BR, \$950/ month heat included. Stove, refrigerator. 1st. last, security, credit check. No Pets. Available immediately. **(413)246-0161.**

THREE RIVERS/THORNDIKE UPDATED COZY one bedroom, stove, refrigerator, wd hook-up, off-street parking. \$625 plus utilities, deposits. NO PETS. **(413)896-2513.**

WARE – SUNNY 3 bedroom townhouse, living rm., dining rm., kitchen, laundry rm., 3 bedroom upstairs, new carpet and paint. Available immediately, \$800. First, last, sec. **617-756-7737.**

Seasonal Rentals

BAREFOOT BAY Sebastian 2 br 2 bath. beach, fishing, golf, tennis, 3 pools, wi-fi, 2/wk/min; Jan \$400/wk \$1000 mo; Feb \$450wk, \$1200 Mo. *\$60 cleaning **(413)532-5009.**

Vacation Rentals

FOR RENT: ONE week at the largest timeshare in the world. Orange Lake is right next to Disney and has many amenities including golf, tennis, and a water park. Weeks available are Feb. 26 to Mar. 4 & Mar. 4 to Mar. 11, 2012. (Sun. to Sun.) \$850 inclusive. Email: carolaction@aol.com

Vacation Rentals

WARM WEATHER IS year round in Aruba. The water is safe, and the dining is fantastic. Walk out to the beach. 3-bedroom, weeks available in May 2012 and more. Sleeps 8. \$3500. Email: carolaction@aol.com for more information.

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\$\$\$ AUTOS WANTED TOP Dollar paid for your unwanted cars, trucks, vans, big and small, running or not. Call **413-534-5400.**

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Out & About

Send all community calendar items to the Agawam Advertiser News at aan@turley.com, fax to 786-8457 or mail to 23 Southwick St., Feeding Hills, MA 01030. Please list time, date and place of event, contact information and a brief description of the activity involved. Deadline for all community submissions is noon on Monday.

Friday, Dec. 30

THE AMERICAN RED CROSS will hold a community blood drive from noon to 6 p.m. at the Agawam Fire Department, 800 Main St. In December, all presenting donors will receive a coupon for a free appetizer or dessert from Chili's Grill & Bar; prizes are non-transferable and not redeemable for cash. To make an appointment to donate blood, call (800) 733-2767 or visit redcross-blood.org.

Saturday, Dec. 31

THE SWINGLES SQUARE DANCE CLUB will hold a New Year's Eve Dance at the East Longmeadow Senior Center, 328 North Main St. Social hour at 6 p.m.; potluck at 6:30 p.m.; early rounds from 7:30 to 8 p.m.; dance from 8 p.m. until 12:30 a.m. Cost is \$10 per person; singles and couples welcome, spectators free. For more information, call Dick Walker at (413) 525-3324.

Tuesday, Jan. 3

THE AGAWAM SENIOR CENTER will host a free movie at 12:30 p.m. ("The Tender Trap"). The public is welcome.

ADULT DROP-IN SIT & KNIT returns to the Agawam Public Library and will be held the first Tuesday of the month through May from 1-3 p.m. The program is for adults 18 and older and no registration is necessary. The public is welcome.

THE AGAWAM CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH FAMILY PLAY GROUP offers crafts, stories, songs, free play and more on Tuesdays from 9:30 to 11 a.m. Playgroup is open to children birth through age 5 with a parent or caregiver, and takes place at the church located at 745 Main St. For more information, email jbrownacc@verizon.net or call the office at 786-7111.

FIRST PARK MEMORIAL BAPTIST CHURCH, corner of Forest Park Ave. and Garfield Street in Springfield, has a Prayer Shawl Ministry that meets every Tuesday at 2 p.m. in the church parlor. Participants enjoy fellowship while creating shawls for those who need them. Every level of knitting or crocheting is welcome. The public is invited to join. For more information, call the church office at 734-1715.

Wednesday, Jan. 4

THE CHILDREN'S PLAY GROUP of First Park Memorial Baptist Church, corner

Junior Women welcome new members



Turley Publications courtesy photo

The Agawam Junior Women's Club (AJWC) welcomed three new members at its December meeting. Pictured from the left are Betsie Stassen, AJWC Membership Chairperson, welcoming newest members Faith Footit, Tammy Randall, and Christine Beauchemin.

of Forest Park Avenue and Garfield Street in Springfield, meets every Wednesday from 10-11:30 a.m. This is an opportunity for mothers or fathers and their pre-school age children to get together and socialize, share, play and laugh. For more information, call the church office at (413) 734-1715.

Thursday, Jan. 5

AMERICAN LEGION POST 185, located at 478 Springfield St. in Feeding Hills, hosts a fish fry every Thursday night through March with servings from 4-7 p.m. Side orders are also available for purchase. Take-out orders are available and the legion is handicapped-accessible. Seniors are welcome.

THE SPRINGFIELD MUSEUMS AT THE QUADRANGLE will present "Ancient Civilizations and Birds of Prey" featuring Julie Anne Collier, licensed birds of prey rehabilitator, at 12:15 in the Museum of Fine Arts at 21 Edwards St., Springfield.

Admission is \$4 (\$2 for museum members). Parking is free. For information, call (413) 263-6800, ext. 488.

UPCOMING AND ONGOING

THE EIGHTH SEASON OF THE AGAWAM CULTURAL COUNCIL'S APPLAUSE SERIES continues Friday, Jan. 6 at 7:30 p.m. at the Agawam Public Library when Southwick residents Ashley Armitage and Bryan Austermann present a broad range of pop, jazz, and show tunes. The Agawam Public Library is located at 750 Cooper St. and can be reached by phone at (413) 789-1550. This event is free and open to the public.

THE AMERICAN RED CROSS will host a community blood drive Tuesday, Jan. 10 from 1-6 p.m. at OMG, 153 Bowles Road, Agawam, and again Friday, Jan. 20 at the Agawam Fire Dept., 800 Main St. from noon to 6 p.m. In January, all present-

ing donors will receive a coupon for a free pound of Dunkin' Donuts coffee; prizes are not redeemable for cash and are non-transferable. To make an appointment, call (800) RED CROSS (800-733-2767) or visit redcross-blood.org.

THE SPRINGFIELD MUSEUMS AT THE QUADRANGLE will present "Creating a Collection: French Paintings in Hartford" featuring Dr. Eric M. Zafran, Hilles Curator of European Art, Wadsworth Museum, Thursday, Jan. 12, at 12:15 in the Museum of Fine Arts at 21 Edwards St., Springfield. Admission is \$4 (\$2 for museum members). Parking is free. For information, call (413) 263-6800, ext. 488.

YOUR CAR, TRUCK OR CAMPER may be worth more as a donation than a trade-in. Call the Massachusetts Association for the Blind at (888) 613-2777 for more information. Towing is free. All donations are tax deductible.

Arts

It's all fun and games at Culture & Cocktails

SPRINGFIELD – The Springfield Museums' Culture & Cocktails series will continue with "It's All Fun and Games" on Thursday, Jan. 5, from 5 to 8 p.m. in the Lyman and Merrie Wood Museum of Springfield History. Guests will be able to try out all the activities in the new Hasbro GameLand, win prizes playing rounds of trivia led by a trivia host, and have a "portrait" drawn by a caricature artist. Museum School art instructor Susan Pecora will demonstrate watercolor painting, and Nicholas Degon will demonstrate glass etching. There will

also be free hors d'oeuvres with a cash bar and music played by a DJ. Admission is free for members of the Springfield Museums and \$5 for non-members. The event is for people over age 21. Both members and nonmembers are encouraged to make advance reservations through springfieldmuseums.org or by phone at (413) 263-6800, ext. 266. The Wood Museum is located at the Quadrangle at 21 Edwards St. in downtown Springfield. Free, secure onsite parking is available. For additional information about Culture & Cocktails, call (413) 263-6800, ext. 379.

ACC meeting open to the public

The Agawam Cultural Council (ACC) will meet, Tuesday, Jan. 10 at 7 p.m. at the Agawam Public Library, 750 Cooper St. The meeting is open to the public. If you have an interest in providing diverse cultural events for the town, a great opportunity exists with the ACC. This all-volunteer organization, appointed by the mayor and funded, in part, by the Massachusetts Cultural Council, is looking for new members. The ACC is charged with bringing engaging, entertaining, and educational events and opportunities in the arts, humanities, and sciences, to children and adults from Agawam and the surrounding communities.

'Stars Over Springfield' at the science museum

SPRINGFIELD – The Springfield Science Museum's large rooftop telescope will be open for public sky-gazing on Friday, Jan. 6, at 7:30 p.m. The program will be held rain or shine. If it is cloudy, a planetarium show will be presented in place of telescope viewing. Stars Over Springfield observatory programs are offered on the first Friday of each month from September through May. The program features an introductory program on topics such as space exploration, seasonal sights of the night sky, current astronomical research, or an explanation of events such as an eclipse or the appearance of a comet. The programs are best suited for families with children ages 8 and older, however younger children are also welcome. Admission is \$3 for adults and \$2 for children 17 and under. The Springfield Science Museum is located on the Quadrangle at 21 Edwards St. in downtown Springfield. Free onsite parking is available. For information about astronomy programs at the museum, call (413) 263-6800, ext. 318.

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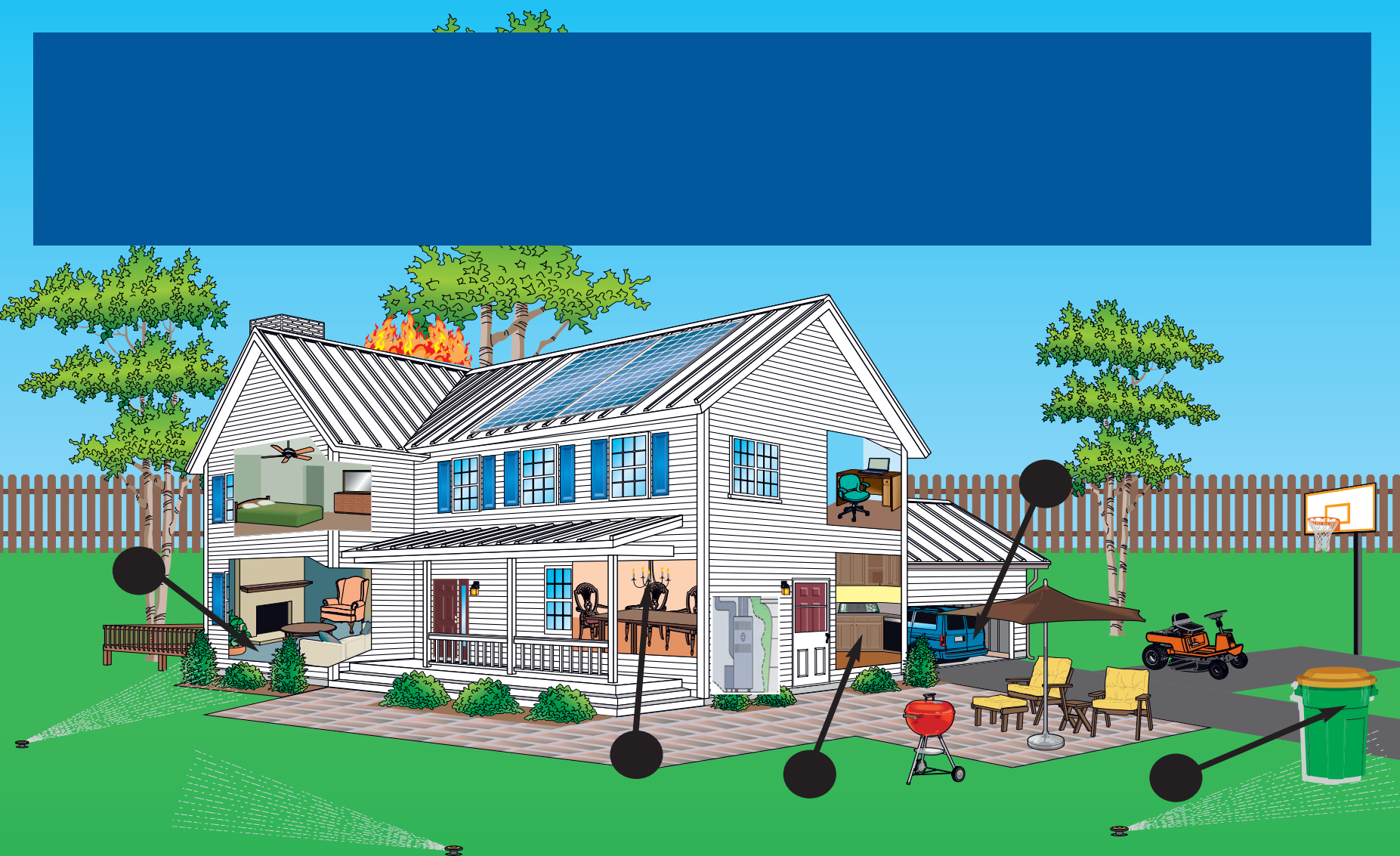


Turley Publications courtesy photo

Members of the West Springfield/Agawam Elks recently distributed dictionaries to all third grade students in the Agawam School System. Pictured above are third grade students at Robinson Park School and members of the Elks. Back row, from left, Elk members Earl Roos, Pat Roos and Betty Foley. Middle row, from left, A.J. Dillard, Nick Burbank, Joe Lochiatto and Ben Gordon. Front row, from left, Kalene Hamel, Kayla Case and Kyle Shields.

AIC offers holiday break courses

SPRINGFIELD - American International College will offer several courses over the holiday break for students who want to earn three or more credits in a two-week period. Intercession 2012 is open to students at any college from Jan. 3-4. Courses include international business, English, management information systems, marketing, political science, psychology, sociology and other core courses. There are online as well as on campus courses being offered, with no application necessary and easy registration. For more information, contact Pam Robinson at (413) 205-3518 visit www.aic.edu/intercession.



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